

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 HA-05 IO-13 /094 W

-----052816 100118Z /70

R 091025Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0892

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L VICTORIA 0418

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SE

SUBJECT: SEYCHELLES DOMESTIC SCENE

REF: A) VICTORIA 394; B) VICTORIA 395

1. TWENTY SEYCHELLOIS SERVED WITH DETENTION ORDERS MAY 4
(REFTEL A) UNDER EMERGENCY SECURITY REGULATIONS INVOKED MAY 3
(REFTEL B) CONTINUE TO BE HELD AT UNION VALE PRISON AND DENIED
VISITATION PRIVILEGES BY RELATIVES OR ATTORNEYS. INTERNAL
SECURITY SITUATION REMAINS CALM THOUGH BOTH MINISTER OF INTERNAL
AFFAIRS BERLOUIS AND POLICE COMMISSIONER PILLAY CONTINUE TO
EXPRESS CONSIDERABLE CONCERN OVER POSSIBILITY OF EXTERNALLY-
MOUNTED COUNTER-COUP ATTEMPT BY MERCENARIES. AT RECEPTION MAY 8
ABOARD VISITING AUSTRALIAN SUBMARINE, BERLOUIS TOLD CHARGE GOS
GROWING INCREASINGLY "IMPATIENT AND IRRITATED" WITH FAILURE OF
KENYAN GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND TO OFFICIAL INQUIRIES REGARDING
ANTI-GOVERNMENT PLOT. GOVERNMENT MEDIA REPORT THAT POLICE
INVESTIGATIONS ARE CONTINUING AND BERLOUIS DID NOT RULE OUT
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POSSIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL ARRESTS IN CONVERSATION WITH BRITISH
HIGH COMMISSIONER PUGH. GOS HAS TURNED ASIDE REQUESTS FROM
ATTORNEYS REPRESENTING DETAINEES AND VISITING NAIROBI-BASED
JOURNALISTS TO SEE ARMS CACHE ALLEGEDLY SEIZED BY POLICE
APRIL 29-30.

2.MAY 6-7 VISIT TO SEYCHELLES BY USN P-3 AIRCRAFT ENROUTE

DIEGO GARCIA-BANDAR ABBAS WAS UNEVENTFUL.

3. COMMENT: ON INTERNAL FRONT, POLITICAL SCENE APPEARS TO BE IN STATE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION PENDING ANTICIPATED BUT UNCONFIRMED MAY 11 RETURN TO SEYCHELLES OF PRESIDENT RENE FROM OVERSEAS VISITS TO PRC AND NORTH KOREA. KNOWLEDGEABLE LOCAL ATTORNEY FEELS RENE WILL ADOPT CONCILIATORY APPROACH AND THAT SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF DETAINEES WILL BE RELEASED IN NEAR FUTURE THOUGH PERHAPS NOT BEFORE JUNE 5, FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF COUP D'ETAT WHICH BROUGHT RENE TO POWER. MEANWHILE, DRACONIAN SECURITY REGULATIONS GOVERNING FREE SPEECH AND PRESS HAVE THUS FAR BEEN UNENFORCED BY SECURITY AUTHORITIES AND LARGELY IGNORED BY POPULACE. INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER "WEEKEND LIFE", IN MAY 8 ISSUE, PUBLISHED SEVERAL ARTICLES CERTAIN TO CAUSE DISPLEASURE TO GOS. BERLOUIS TOLD CHARGE THAT IT IS NOT GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION "TO BAN" NEWSPAPER. AN IMPORTANT INDICATION OF GOS ATTITUDE TOWARD DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WILL ARISE ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 3 WHEN NEW SECURITY REGULATIONS ARE DUE TO LAPSE UNLESS SPECIFICALLY RENEWED.

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